

SEMER PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council: Victoria Waples

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED WITHIN THE ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT AS CARRIED OUT BY TREVOR BROWN, CPFA – DATED 28 APRIL 2024.

EXPLANATION FOR THE NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IN THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2023-2024.

REPORT ORIGINALLY SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING OF 18TH JULY 2024 WITH UPDATED SUBMITTED AT MEETING OF 21ST NOVEMBER 2024.

Recommendation	Response	Timescale	Responsibility	Actioned
The Council should comply with the Local Government Act 1972 at the meeting in May 2024 and formally elect a Chair as its first item of business.	Agenda and minutes for the meeting of 9 th May 2024 demonstrate that this has been enacted.	May 2024 and thereafter annually.	Clerk.	Actioned and completed – May 2024
The Council should consider and adopt appropriate Data Protection Policies and Procedures to support compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.	The following policies will be brought to council for adoption: Data Protection Policy to include Subject Access Policy and Procedures Lawful Basis for Processing Data Data and Electronic Information Retention Policy	Prior to 31 st March 2025	Clerk and members.	For adoption - November 2024
Council should consider adopting a wider range of Policies, Procedures and Protocols which will assist in achieving and	The following policies will be brought to council for adoption: Training Policy Expenses Policy	Prior to 31 st March 2025	Clerk and members	To be actioned

maintaining a high standard of governance and administration.	Risk Management Policy Disciplinary and grievance procedures Media Policy			
Construction and Publication of a Website Accessibility Statement to assist compliance with the current website accessibility legislation.	Once the website has been transferred to Suffolk.cloud, the website host will be asked to publish a suitable document detailing the technical aspects of the website. This will then enable the council to publish its own statement in relation to the content on the website and how to address accessibility issues.	Prior to March 2025.	Suffolk.cloud and Clerk	To be actioned – November 2024
Council to consider increasing the level of Fidelity Guarantee insurance cover as current level did not meet the recommended guidelines.	At renewal, the clerk has increased the Fidelity Guarantee cover from £5,000 to £25,000 which is the next bracket available.	June 2024.	Clerk	Actioned and completed – June 2024
Council to construct and adopt a reserves policy to provide a framework for future management of reserves in place.	A Reserves policy will be available for adoption at the meeting of November 2024.	November 2024.	Clerk	To be adopted – November 2024
Publication of all of the data as specified in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Guidance Notes in conformity with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.	All relevant documentation pertaining to a smaller council with income and expenditure under £25,000 was published on the freely accessible website as operated by the parish council by 1 st July 2024.	Prior to July 1 st 2024.	Clerk.	Actioned and completed.
All cheque book counterfoils to be initialled by signatories in verification of the payment, in accordance with council's own Financial Regulations.	Effective 1 st April 2024, this system is employed.	1 st April 2024.	Members.	Actioned and completed.